

Application No. 10/507,404
Amendment dated May 22, 2006
Reply to Office Action of March 22, 2006

Docket No.: 209546-84417

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claim 1-8 are amended. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Applicant thanks Examiner Menendez for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during an interview. The sum and substance of the interview is contained in the following Remarks. Applicant has amended the claims to put them in condition for allowance and to further clarify the differences between Applicant's invention and the cited art.

The Office action rejected claims 1-4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Scott et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,521,413), and claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Scott et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,521,413) in view of Frischmann et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,676,346). In light of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully asserts that all rejections under Frischmann, Scott or any of the art of record have been overcome.

Amended claim 1 requires a vehicle trim panel assembly comprising a vehicle trim panel; a connector including a head and a shank, wherein said head is detachably connected to said shank, said head having a trim retaining end, a shank engaging end extending from the vehicle trim panel, and a break neck therebetween, said shank having a head end and an anchor end; and a hardware component defining an aperture, said shank of said connector extending through said aperture and retaining said hardware component to said vehicle trim panel, wherein said shank is adapted to secure the hardware component to a vehicular structure, wherein said trim retaining end breaks from said shank engaging end at said break neck when a load is applied to said head allowing removal of the trim panel from the shank, the hardware component and the vehicular structure.

Respectfully, Applicant submits that none of the cited art discloses, teaches or suggest Applicant's claimed structure.

Scott discloses a breakaway base support for roadside standards and Frischmann discloses a generic metal fastening element. Notwithstanding that both references, along with the art of record, fail to disclose teach, or suggest a vehicle trim panel assembly having a trim panel, a hardware component and a connector, it is also submitted that neither reference, either alone or in permitted combination with any art of record, disclose a connector that secures the hardware component to the trim panel for attachment to a vehicular structure. For at least these

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reasons, the Examiner is urged to allow the claims as presented, and pass them to issuance in their current form.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-3145, under Order No. 209546-84417 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

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